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Letter dated 26 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to enclose herewith a statement of the delegation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by His Excellency, Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of Mauritius, on 24 September 2011 in the General Assembly (see annex).

I should be most grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 8.

(*Signed*) Mark **Lyall Grant**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 26 September 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Statement of the delegation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by the Prime Minister of Mauritius in the general debate on 24 September 2011

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland maintains that the British Indian Ocean Territory is British and has been since 1814. It does not recognize the sovereignty claim of the Mauritian Government. However, the British Government has recognized Mauritius as the only State which has a right to assert a claim of sovereignty when the United Kingdom relinquishes its own sovereignty. Successive British Governments have given undertakings to the Government of Mauritius that the Territory will be ceded when no longer required for defence purposes.

The British Government believes that the Marine Protected Area, established in the British Indian Ocean Territory on 1 April 2010, is the right way ahead for furthering the environmental protection of the Territory and encouraging others to do the same in important and vulnerable areas under their sovereign control. As has previously been made clear, the decision to establish the Marine Protected Area is without prejudice to the outcome of the current pending proceedings at the European Court of Human Rights.